

School traditions

Two important traditions in American schools are the 'Homecoming' and 'Senior Prom' celebrations. For the students, they are the highlights of the school year.

HOMECOMING

Homecoming is an annual tradition in US high schools and colleges, especially those in small towns. It is a week-long celebration for the students and old graduates, who are called *alumni*, a Latin word for 'students'. It usually takes place in late September or early October. The activities vary widely. There's usually a banquet and a dance, a football game and other sports activities, a parade with floats, the school band and sports teams, and the coronation of a Homecoming King and Queen.

The Homecoming dance is the culminating event of the week and is usually held in the school gym. The venue is decorated and there is always a disco or a band. In many ways, it is a fall (autumn) Prom. Traditionally, students attend the dance in couples (boyfriend and girlfriend) but, recently, many have started to go with groups of friends.



Warm up

1 Answer these questions.

- 1 What events or achievements at school do you think should be celebrated?
- 2 Does your school organize any social events or celebrations? If so, what? If not, what school celebrations would you enjoy?

Reading

2 Read about Homecoming and make notes.

- 1 Length:
- 2 Season:
- 3 Events:
- 4 Participants:

3 Read about Senior Prom and answer the questions.

- 1 When are Senior Proms usually held?
- 2 What is the origin of the tradition?
- 3 Where are Prom nights usually held today?
- 4 What do the students wear?
- 5 What happens during the Prom night?

Vocabulary

4 Draw word diagrams for Homecoming and Senior Prom night. List words and phrases related to these areas:

- people
- competitions/elections
- activities
- clothes and accessories